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ABSTRACT

Three short articles about foreign language braille are presented for braille transcribers and teachers of the visually handicapped. Because dictionaries of languages other than English rarely show syllable division, the articles provide guidelines to the syllabication of Spanish, French, and German. The guidelines give specific rules concerning the division of diphthongs and consonantal units, adverbial prefixes, and compound words. Although the guidelines will not provide for every eventuality, they will cover most situations likely to be encountered. (LH)

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FOREIGN LANGUAGE BRAILLE

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Syllabication: Spanish

Alice M. Childers, Chairman

In transcribing foreign language texts, do you or do you not divide a foreign word at the end of a braille line? Usually foreign words in beginners' texts are not divided, while those in intermediate and advanced texts are. When the level of instruction is not obvious, the print text will give a clue. You may assume that a text with divided words in print should also have divided words in braille. If there are none, do not divide in braille.

When in doubt about the correct syllabication of a word, do not divide. It is better to lose a few cells than to mislead.

Dictionaries of languages other than English rarely show syllable division. This is due in part to the fact that many spelling systems are less complicated than English and it is easier to divide the written word according to the spoken syllable division.

In an effort to assist braillists who are less than fluent in every language they are called upon to transcribe, guidelines to syllabication in a number of languages are planned for this column. The first is Spanish.

Vowels

In addition to *a, e, i, o* and *u, y* is sometimes considered a vowel, as when replacing *i* in diphthongs at the end of a word and in one-syllable words.

The following combinations of vowels are *diphthongs*, pronounced as a single syllable, and may not be divided:

ai	ei	oi		ái	éi	ói	
au	eu	ou		áu	éu	óu	
ia	ie	io	iu	iá	ié	ió	iú
ua	ue	uo	ui	uá	ué	uó	uí

Sequences of vowels which are not diphthongs and may be divided are those in which *i* or *ú* precedes or follows another vowel.

A *triphthong* is a combination of three vowels, the middle one of which is stressed and the combination pronounced as a single syllable. They are:

iai	iei	ioi	iui	uai	uei	uoi	
iau	ieu	iou		uau	ueu	uou	uiu

If the *i* or *u* at the beginning or end of the sequence has an acute accent, it is not part of a triphthong and may be divided.

Consonants

The letter *y* is a consonant at the beginning of a word (before a vowel) and between vowels.

The *digraphs* are *ch, ll, rr*.

Consonantal units consist of certain letters followed by *l* or *r* which are pronounced in the same syllable with the following vowel. They are:

bl	cl		fl	gl	pl	
br	cr	dr	fr	gr	pr	tr

Syllabication

1. Diphthongs, triphthongs, digraphs and consonantal units may not be divided.

2. Division is made on a vowel or on a diphthong before a single consonant, a digraph, or a consonantal unit:

ca-sa bue-no re-yes mu-cho po-llo
co-rrer ha-blar li-bro

3. In a group of two or more consonants, division is made before the last consonant, digraph, or consonantal unit:

ac-ta ac-ción ist-mo mar-cha cen-tro

4. Division may be made between vowels not constituting a diphthong or triphthong or between a diphthong and another vowel:

ca-er le-er ba-úl flú-ido terní-ais

5. Certain adverbial prefixes are kept intact. They are:

anti bis circum cis des inter mal pan
sub super trans tras

Other prefixes are also divisible from the stem in accordance with rules 2 to 4 above.

contre-parte ab-negación co-existir

In no case may division on a prefix be made before an *s* followed by another consonant. Divide as follows:

cons-titución pers-pectivo subs-tancia

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EC 165 141

FOREIGN LANGUAGE BRAILLE

Syllabication: French

Alice M. Childers, Chairman

This is the second column on syllabication (the first was on Spanish, Spring 1982 issue). Since most foreign language dictionaries do not show syllabication, even transcribers familiar with the language may have difficulty knowing where to divide words.

As stated in the earlier column, foreign words in beginners' texts are usually not divided while those in more advanced texts are. It is suggested that you follow the practice established in the print text in deciding whether or not to divide words in the braille transcription. When doubtful about the correct syllabication, do not divide.

French is one of the more complex languages to syllabicate. The following guidelines will not provide for every eventuality but they will cover most situations we encounter.

Vowels

The vowel letters include *y*, as well as *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, and *u*. The following combinations of vowels are *diphthongs* or *triphthongs*, pronounced as one syllable and never divided.

ai (ay) aou aû
ei (ey) eau eu
oe oeu oi (oy) ou oû oui
ui

Consonants

The following *digraphs*, or consonantal units, are inseparable with the exceptions noted.

bl br bs (unless followed by a vowel)
ch cl cr
dh dr
fl fr
gl gn gr
ns (unless followed by a vowel)
ph pl pr
rh rs (unless followed by a vowel)
th tr
vr

Syllabication

1. A consonant between two vowels begins a new syllable. Note that the final syllable, although "silent" when pronounced, may be divided.

ca-pi-ta-li-sa-ble ki-lo-mé-tri-que
li-bé-ra-toi-re paie-ment vi-gou-reux

2. Two adjoining consonants (except digraphs) between two vowels separate into two syllables.

chan-geant cor-res-pon-dan-ce des-cen-dre
in-ter-val-le res-ti-tu-er veil-le

3. A vowel can begin a syllable, other than an initial syllable, only when preceded by another vowel.

an-ci-en feu-il-le mi-eux ou-est vo-ya-ge

4. Digraph consonants are inseparable.

ac-cla-mer ad-mi-nis-tra-tif ap-pren-dre
com-pa-gnie com-plè-te-ment des-crip-ti-ve
en-cof-frer li-bre mé-tho-de né-gli-gen-ce
or-dre ou-vri-er pu-bli-que re-cher-che re-gret

The *apostrophe*, used to indicate the omission of *a, e, i,* is an integral part of the language. Although a word may be divided at the apostrophe in print, do not divide at this point in braille.

au-jour-d'hui l'e-mis-si-on d'a-bord

The *hyphen* is also widely used. It is important to know when the hyphen at the print margin is being used orthographically rather than for syllabication. When such words fall in the middle of the braille line rather than at the end, they must be brailled as separate words connected by a hyphen, not as one word. It is also desirable to avoid dividing any of these words. Even if you have to sacrifice a few cells, make it *parlez-vous*, not *par-lez-vous*.

Orthographic uses of the hyphen are:

1. Between verbs and pronouns in questions: *Parlez-vous?*
2. Between verbs and object pronouns: *Parlez-moi.*
3. Between verbs and the participles *en, y, ce, on: Allez-y.*
4. Between the personal pronoun and the adjective *même: moi-même.*
5. On each side of the euphonic *t: A-t-il?*
6. Before *ci* and *là: celui-ci*, and in certain expressions after *ci* and *là*; as in *ces choses là-dessus.*
7. After *entre* in all reciprocal verbs: *s'entre-tuer.*
8. Between *demi* and its noun: *une demi-heure.*
9. In compound nouns and adjectives: *arc-en-ciel* and *nouveau-né.*
10. In spelled numbers: *vingt-deux.*
11. Between first names: *Louis-Charles-Alfred de Musset.*
12. Between the word *Saint* and the following name, when used to designate a locality, a feast-day, a street, etc.: *la rue Saint-Jacques.*
13. In geographic names: *Saint-Valery-en-Caux.*
14. In certain invariable phrases: *avant-hier.*

Syllabication: German

Alice M. Childers, Chairman

This is the third in a series on the syllabication of foreign languages. The previous columns were on Spanish (Spring 1982) and French (Fall 1982). Guidance is needed by most transcribers because foreign language dictionaries rarely show syllabication.

In deciding whether to divide foreign words in a braille transcription, be guided by the print text. Usually, beginning texts do not contain divided words, whereas more advanced texts do. When you are doubtful about the correct syllabication of a word, do not divide.

The following guidelines are intended for those transcribers who have a limited knowledge of German. They deal with the most frequent combinations encountered and are not so comprehensive as to cover all possible problems that might concern a linguist

Alphabet

Before 1941, German was set in the Fraktur alphabet. It has been replaced by the Latin alphabet and is now rarely used. You will find the Fraktur letters in Appendix E of *Code of Braille Textbook Formats and Techniques*, 1977. This list is for the information of the transcriber and it need not be listed, with the exception of the three accented letters, on a Special Symbols page.

The Fraktur alphabet employed four ligatures: *ch*, *ck*, ß *(ss)*, and *tz*. The only one that has been carried over to the Latin alphabet is ß . It may be represented by *ss*. The following usages have been retained in syllabications: *ch* and ß may never be divided, *ck* must be changed to *k-k* if divided, and *tz* may be divided. There are no special braille symbols for these ligatures.

Vowels

The vowels are *a, e, i, o, u* and *y* and include the umlauts *ä, ö* and *ü*. Vowel sequences, or *diphthongs*, that follow may not be divided:

aa ae (when replacing ä) ai au äu
ee ei eu
ie
oe (whether or not replacing ö) oi oo
ue (when replacingü)

Consonants

The following *digraphs* and *consonantal units* may not be divided, with the exceptions indicated:

ph
qu
sch (for an exception, see No. 7 below)
ss (when replacing ß)
st (for an exception, see No. 7 below)

Syllabication

1. Diphthongs, digraphs and consonantal units may not be divided.

2. Division is made on a vowel or on a diphthong before a single consonant, a digraph or a consonantal unit:

le-ben lie-ben wa-schen Mei-ster gro-ssen

3. In a group of two or more consonants, division is made before the last consonant, digraph or consonantal unit:

Was-ser stimm-ten kämp-fen wün-schen Pfing-sten

4. Division may be made between two vowels not constituting a diphthong or between a diphthong and a vowel:

Oze-an Trau-ung

5. Certain adverbial prefixes are kept intact:

ab	ein	in	ver
an	emp	miss	vor
auf	ent	mit	weg
aus	er	nach	wider
be	fort	nieder	wieder
bei	ge	ob	zer
durch	her	um	zu
	hin	un	zurück
	hinter	unter	zusammen

6. Certain suffixes are kept intact:
artig chen haft heit schaft tum

7. Compound words are divided according to their component parts, and within each part according to rules 1 to 6 above.

alt-italienisch Dachs-hund Tür-angel

The compounding *r* and *s*, if used, are kept with the preceding component:

dar-auf wor-auf Redens-art Orts-angabe

When the first word ends with *s* and the second begins with *t*, the juxtaposition does not constitute a digraph:

Reichs-tag

The same is true when the suffix -chen follows an *s*:

biss-chen Fäss-chen Häus-chen